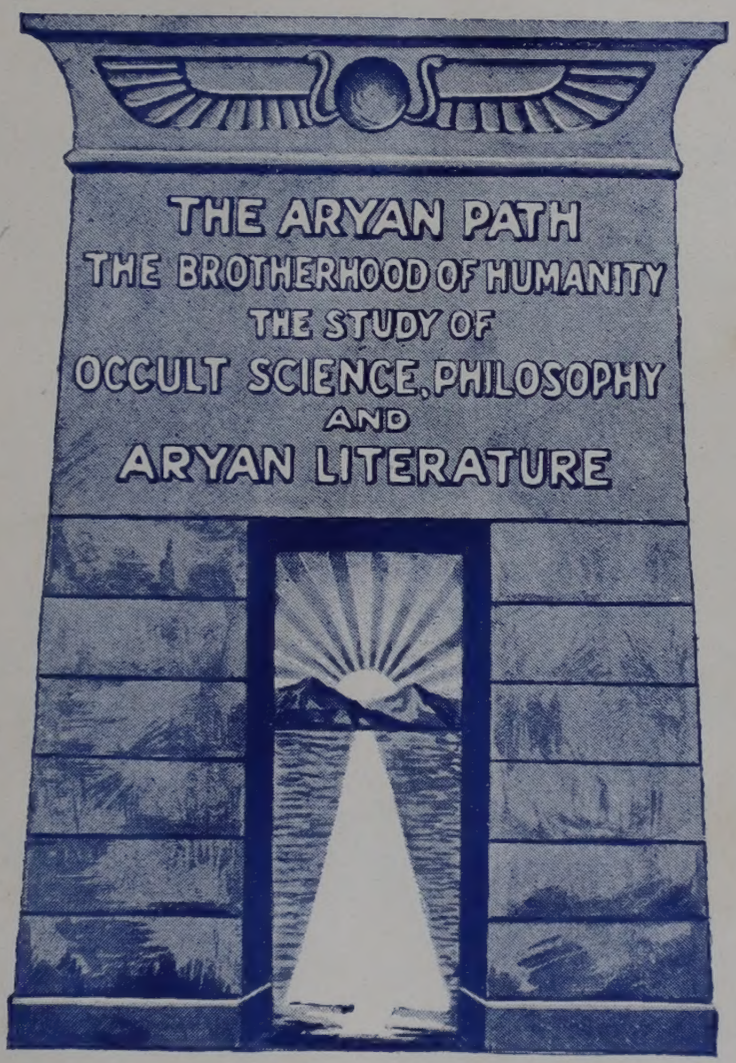
THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



Vol. XXV No. 12

October 17, 1955

We live in an atmosphere of gloom and despair, but this is because our eyes are downcast and rivetted to the earth, with all its physical and grossly material manifestations. If, instead of that, man proceeding on his life-journey looked—not heavenward, which is but a figure of speech—but *within himself* and centred his point of observation on the *inner* man, he would soon escape from the coils of the great serpent of illusion. From the cradle to the grave, his life would then become supportable and worth living, even in its worst phases.

—H. P. Blavatsky

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(b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th October 1955. VOL. XXV. No. 12

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th October 1955. VOL. XXV. No. 12

THE HOUR OF CHOICE

It is by passion and desire we are made to evolve through the mansions of death called lives on earth.

—W. Q. JUDGE (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 50)

For the purpose of transmuting our ordinary ways of life into the extraordinary ways of the Higher Life we have to overcome our desires. Desires of the flesh, fleshly appetites, as well as mental cravings, rooted in ambition, etc., all have to be handled and overcome. *Kama*—desires and passions—is the worst enemy and a most friendly helper of each of us, whether we be simple-minded men and women or those possessing "educated" minds. The mind acquires perverted ingenuity and peculiar cunning through the force of desires and passions. The strength of *Kama* is both wide and deep and the *Gita* describes it as the constant enemy of man on earth.

Desires and passions are not born of the body. *Kama* is a principle in itself. Therefore it exists and functions in its macrocosmic aspect. What is *Kama* in Nature? Says *The Secret Doctrine*:—

> ...Kama...is in the Rig Veda (*x*. 129) the personification of that feeling which leads and propels to creation. He was the *first movement* that stirred the ONE, after its manifestation from the purely abstract principle, to create, "Desire first arose in It, which was the *primal germ of mind*; and which sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered to be the bond which connects Entity with Non-Entity." A hymn in the *Atharva Veda* exalts Kama into a supreme God and Creator, and says: "Kama was born the first. Him, neither gods nor fathers (Pitara) nor men have equalled." (II. 176)

In *The Theosophical Glossary* H.P.B. has some important and significant remarks, under "Kama-deva," which the student trying to understand his own desires and passions will do well not only to study but to ponder over.

But turn to the microcosmic aspect. When was *Kama* acquired by man? The human form was acquired by us in the long course of our eternal pilgrimage. So also the light of Mind. The *Chhayas* of our Lunar Ancestors became the starting point of our physical corpus. This was in the first Root Race. The lighting up of Manas took place in the third Root Race.

When did man develop the principle of desires and passions? *The Secret Doctrine* indicates that it was during the third Root Race that *Kama* was evolved (II. 116). It further points out that the rudiments of *Kama* are present as instinct in the animal kingdom, their intensity and development varying and changing with the species (II. 255). So, at the time of the lighting up of the Mind and the birth of Self-Consciousness, the animal-man (man in form, but not man in mind) had the roots of *Kama* and *Manas*. These roots provided the basis of aid without which Nature could do nothing further to help on man's evolution. *Prakriti*, Nature, unaided always fails.

So, man had, from the very hour of the birth of Self-Consciousness, a dual aspect in his desire principle: the instinctual desires of the animal-man and the mental desires of the self-conscious intelligence. In the course of evolution the higher mental desires were preyed upon by the instinctual and thus sprang into being the dual aspect of mind—the lower and the higher. *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 614) speaks of "*Manas* in its dual aspect"—sometimes connected with *Buddhi* and sometimes allowing itself to be dragged down by the *Kama* principle.

The mystery of the fiend in man, the power of the constant enemy, has a peculiar intimacy with the aspect of *Manas* which has been dragged down and absorbed by *Kama*.

So each one of us has in him two kinds of desires—the lower and the higher. To distinguish the one from the other we refer to them as lower desires and higher aspirations. The root or womb of the lower is egotistic pride; of the higher aspirations, the Innate Idea, the Divine Intuition of Progression to Perfection. Naturally associated with the latter are the two cognate ideas of Universal Brotherhood and Perfected Masters. They embody within Themselves Perfection through Self-effort along the Right Lines, and are therefore named Elder Brothers.

In our effort to transmute our lower desires and make them fit vehicles of the Inner Ego, the Higher *Manas* joined to the Atma-Buddhic duad, and also to activate the higher aspirations in our embodied existence, we need accurate knowledge. H.P.B.'s highly important article on "Psychic and Noëtic Action" contains numerous valuable practical hints; its teachings not only provoke thought but also stir our aspirations and suggest, if not compel, application to the *Kama* principle in us.

Kama, desires and aspirations, circulates in the vital astral body as blood circulates in the physical. When the lower passionate desires are active certain bodily organs, and the lives which compose them, are affected, causing illnesses and ailments, passing, chronic or even congenital. These illnesses have a perverse influence and effect on the brain, as a reflex action. Conversely, when higher aspirations are active, they help noëtic or spiritual functions, and affect for the better the subtle organisms of the brain and the real heart; these also have a reflex action on the body, especially the astral body.

It is often said that the fight is in the Mind. That fight is dual: the struggle of the lower mind when it endeavours to free itself, to extricate itself, from the clutches of *Kama*. Like a fish out of water it struggles and tries to go back to *Kama*. When the mind recognizes its own virtue and power then commences the war, of Man, *Nara*, against his own lower machinating personality.

The war is from within without. There are thus two main phases: in the first the lower mind, having freed itself from gross desires and passions, becomes the *Antahkaranic* being. This is sometimes called the Internal Organ, the Conscience, and also the Heart. The thinking and aspiring "I" faces the lower animal nature; *Antahkarana* faces the animalism of the carnal nature. As the *Antahkaranic* being wins battles over lust and wrath and greed, it becomes more and more a true *Nara*, Man. To attain to true Manhood one passes through a double process. First, he subdues and controls his animal self and achieves progress. Then follows a more inner, esoteric endeavour to final Manhood. *Nara*, the youth, has to become *Nara*, the Sage. Doubt, hypocrisy and other mental desires are overcome by the higher Knowledge of the Science of Occultism, *Raja-Vidya*, the Kingly Wisdom. The Higher Manas, the real Human Soul, inspires the *Antahkaranic* being and performs *Yoga*—union—with it.

Most earnest aspirants of this cycle are the "educated" men, versed in worldly wisdom and graduated in worldly progress and prosperity. They are wrongly educated and the process of unlearning is hard and disquieting.

Ambition is the weapon of the wrongly educated mind; for through it Duryodhana, the Wealth of Evil, triumphs. Every aspirant has to face this stage. W. Q. Judge wrote to an aspiring correspondent:—

> I fell to thinking about you and wondering whether a future of power, a brilliancy of knowledge, was not your aspiration, and what effect certain occurrences would have upon that.

Our modern education is a strengthener of the non-spiritual mind—vigorous, with lust for power, having the "I-know-it-all" attitude, and guiding relatives, friends and strangers—often, alas! to their doom. True education is the awakener of real brotherliness, humility, resourcefulness, adaptability, grace of mind with insight to serve, while appearing as nothing in the eyes of the world.

Students of Theosophy! What training are you giving to your mind? Would you have it become brilliant, masterly, perverse to the extent that its machinations are not known to you? Or would you rather develop the power to hear what the Masters have said or are saying, the power to see under and beyond the surface, to act with patience and deliberation in terms of what the Esoteric Philosophy teaches? The hour of choice is upon us all.

NAMES AND THINGS

[Reprinted from *Theosophy*, Vol. XV, pp. 444–6, for August 1927.—EDS.]

> If I were to say, "Charley is in a tantrum," you would know the "tantrum" might be in any place, but it was Charley's condition I spoke of. So, "Helen is in a state of great excitement," might mean she was upstairs, or out in the street; because the place didn't have anything to do with the condition she was in.—*The Eternal Verities*

Thus reads the little book which has helped so many children to gain a truer understanding of life, in an attempt to show that "state" and "place" are not interchangeable terms, so that physical misconceptions of time, place and causality may in some degree be lifted. Since all students of Theosophy are children, adults as well as juniors, and since a materialistic universe represents the only "reality" to all, some considerations upon our common ways of looking at things may be helpful and enable us to study our texts in a truer light.

Our physical, waking universe is a universe of relativities. Everything perceived therein is an object. No object is considered by us alone, and of itself. In position it is north, south, east or west of—or above, below, behind, before—some other object. In size it is larger or smaller than something else; in texture it is smoother, rougher, finer, coarser—always comparative; in qualities it is better, worse—and so on. There is nothing absolute in our waking world; that is, without qualities—which always represent relativities. THAT alone is absolute which perceives them all—unchanged and infinite. We may extend this view of a relative universe to include the metaphysical world. This *thought* is better or worse than that, more inclusive or less, as the case may be; this *motive* is purer or less pure than another; this *feeling* is more agreeable than some other feeling; this *sensation* keener than that. So also in the world of forces: one is more or less powerful than another. Likewise in the world of morals: conduct is better or worse, more constructive or less constructive, right or wrong.

Relativities are essential to learning: it is perception of the difference between one thing and another which enables us to acquire knowledge. All things change; by reason of our own inherent permanency we are able to relate the changes one to another, and to ourselves, storing the results of experience in the appropriate instrument. We do not change; our expansion is in knowledge, and in the development and range of our various instruments of perception and action, of which even the highest is relative. Man in his essential nature is no evolution, but the Evolver of all. He makes every "place" or "state," but is himself none of them. He is the *power* to make them, to perceive them, to experience them, to learn from them, to change them, to end them—and to begin them again. He is the Consciousness and the field of consciousness and all things whatsoever that manifest within that field—the things and the field itself periodically appearing and disappearing. The Witness remains, whether there be any thing to witness or no thing.

It will thus be seen that there are no words in which to describe our essential Being. Were there such they would be greater than ourselves, a logical absurdity. Absolute Being does not depend on relations. All relations change. They exist in and because of It. IT does not depend upon them.

When words are used in the Theosophical teachings to symbolize states, we almost universally materialize the ideas and make physical *places* of these states. To us, Nirvana is a place, Devachan is a place, Kama Loka is a place, the various Rounds are places, Globes A, B, C and E, F and G are places; a Race is a body, the Principles are things, Evolution is a kind of personal

god, as is also Karma, and Life is what we see with our physical eyes. We may believe that we are exempt from this distorted way of looking at ideas, but a sincere self-examination will usually demonstrate the contrary. The very speech that we use tends to bind us to physical angles of vision ; it is barren of words relating to the metaphysical. This even extends to our descriptions of the stimulation of our senses. We say, for instance, that a flower has an exquisite odour. It has nothing of the kind: that "flower" radiates a portion of itself which we perceive and evaluate by the power which enables us to differentiate that characteristic of matter which we call "smell." The flower's part in the transaction is a radiation of its own substance, due to the operation of its intelligence. We perceive the workings of the flower's "mind," and say, "It *smells* sweet!"

Nirvana is not a place; it is a condition, a state. The teaching affirms that there are men who are in Nirvana, and at the same time here on earth in physical bodies. Devachan and Kama Loka are states, not places. When we are unreservedly happy we are in Devachan ; when we are full of unsatisfied desires we are in Kama Loka—even while we are still living in our physical bodies. Those in Devachan or Kama Loka after the death of the body are not any-*where* ; they are *any* where. A Round is not a place ; it is merely a name for symbolizing a certain cycle of evolution. A Race is not a group of bodies ; it is a class of intelligences of a certain range, operating together. Globes A, B, C, and all the others are not places ; they are centres of consciousness, just as man's "principles" are modes of consciousness, expressing themselves through differentiations of substance. Evolution is a process. Life is *not* what we see around us—the phenomena ; it is the noumenon—the cause of what we see.

Students know all these things, but the race ideas continually reassert their domination over us and the mass-influence of many minds as yet unawakened to realities beclouds the little clear-seeing we have thus far developed. We need to be continually examining our angles of vision and thus clarifying our perceptions, while we strive to counteract the human tendency to dwarf and materialize metaphysical conceptions. Thus shall we help ourselves, and become less liable to mislead others. Thus shall "places" and "states" and "goings" and "comings" take their true positions among the relativities, in the consciousness of the Absolute Being that we all are.

> What is here, that is there ; what is there, that also is here. He goes from death to death who sees a difference between them.
>
> This is to be received by the mind, that there is no difference here. From death to death he goes, who sees a difference.

SERVE THE CAUSE!

[Reprinted from *The Vahan* for August 1891. —Eds.]

Q. —I am very much interested in Theosophy and should like to help the Society. What work can I do ?

W.Q.J.—This is a Theosophical business question. Service is rendered in many different ways : by work in the Branches, by spreading literature, by explaining the doctrines and doing away with misconceptions, by contributing money to be used in the work, by constituting oneself a loyal unit if ability and time be lacking ; and chiefly always by acquiring a knowledge of Theosophical doctrines so as to be able to give a clear answer to inquiry. One could also procure some inquiring correspondent and by means of letters answer questions as to Theosophical literature and doctrines. These are all general answers, while the question requires almost a personal examination. Any work that is sincerely done with good motive and to the best of one's ability is good Theosophical work.

INNOVATIONS, LINES OF INFLUENCE AND DARK SHADOWS

The inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations moves on.

Since the ways of the world are Light and Darkness in succession, it may be instructive to trace some of the workings of these ways in the activities of the Reformation during the European Renaissance. The light poured out on Europe for several centuries came from an exalted Body of Adepts, Workers from the Lodge of Masters of Wisdom. And in the observing of the moving on of "the inexorable shadow," a student becomes somewhat aware of the long interwoven Lines of Influence maintained by the Adept Workers, without apparent historical beginnings. Mme. H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Key to Theosophy*:—

> ...during the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by those "Masters"...to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity in a marked and definite way. Towards the close of each century you will invariably find that an outpouring or upheaval of spirituality—or call it mysticism if you prefer—has taken place. Some one or more persons have appeared in the world as their agents, and a greater or less amount of occult knowledge and teaching has been given out. If you care to do so, you can trace these movements back, century by century, as far as our detailed historical records extend. (2nd Indian ed., p. 304)

Those Master Workers were well acquainted with the world and prepared to meet its ways. Therefore They were not surprised when Their mental outpouring of Manasic Enlightenment upon Europe from the 14th century on was constantly pursued by the dark shadows of ignorance and active opposition. They had stirred up the dread sentinels of fear and resistance to improvement, which ignorance always places at its portals. Those sentinels, for Europe, at the time of the Renaissance, were largely massed within the crypts and cells of the Roman Catholic Church. The leaders of the Church may not have known what the Light was or from whom it came, but they recognized its opposition to themselves, and promptly sent out their counterblasts of darkness.

Often, to understand the less evident characteristics of a period, some account must be given of earlier events and their relation shown to the period under study. In this case it is well to turn to Frederick II, King of Sicily in the first part of the 13th century. Where Frederick got his advanced political governmental ideas may not be positively stated. Some of them were probably age-long inheritances from his Germanic (Hohenstaufen) ancestry. He was the grandson of Frederick Barbarossa, one of the wisest, strongest figures of Germany in the middle ages. But through his father's marriage with the heiress of Sicily and the making of the family home in that island, Frederick's youth was much influenced by the Greek and Saracen culture which prevailed there and was decidedly superior to the culture yet reached in the north. His unusual talents were therefore greatly developed even in his boyhood. Later, as King of Sicily, his court was in all cultural directions one of the most brilliant in Europe. He also by election and coronation had become Emperor of Germany. Hence he was the most outstanding figure of his time and his influence was very great.

In Sicily he instituted remarkable reforms, most of which anticipated the means used by other countries in establishing strong centralized states. A mere list of these is notable. For instance, in judicial matters the king's courts were put above feudal and even ecclesiastical courts. In harmony with this, both nobles and clergy were made subject to taxation equally with the townsmen; whereas in most countries the clergy were entirely exempt, and the nobles found ways of evading what legal restrictions existed. Another important recognition of justice to townsmen was their admittance to the central assembly (a kind of parliament), which before had been only a council of feudal lords. Also, the power of the feudal nobility was lessened by forbidding private warfare, and by the

destruction of castles (nests of private war) which had been built without royal authority. These measures alone tended to create greater peace and prosperity among the people. Best of all, from our point of view, was the abolition of serfdom in the royal domain.

Every one of these reforms might have been inspired in Frederick's mind by the secret Adept leadings towards human brotherhood and true democracy; and it seems very probable that they were reinforced by that Influence, that they were watched with deep interest and were carried far beyond the bounds of Sicily. It is most credible that Marsilio of Padua, who a century after Frederick's time wrote a book setting forth some of these and many other reformatory ideas, was given much inspiration and practical encouragement by Frederick II's example.

But dark shadows followed, nevertheless. Despite all his brilliance, Frederick was a libertine in morals; and, allied with that, his indifference to Church and theology brought charges from the clergy of many heresies. Naturally, he thus lowered the beneficial effects he might have produced, especially in other countries. The dark shadow began to include a fierce struggle between papacy and empire. The Pope excommunicated Frederick and called a Church council; but Frederick's son prevented its meeting by capturing the fleet which carried some of its members. A council was later held at Lyons, by which Frederick was declared guilty of perjury, heresy and sacrilege. He was even deposed as emperor, and active war was raised against his Hohenstaufen House, which in time affected most of Europe. He maintained his imperial position till his death; but at that time his empire crumbled to pieces, and much of the otherwise beneficent effect of his life was lost.

Work by the Adepts had long been more active in the last quarter of each century (*The Key to Theosophy*, 2nd Indian ed., p. 304), and this custom was made more openly evident in the West in the last quarter of the 14th century. In that Last Quarter there must have been a special attempt to waken brotherliness in the minds of all classes of men. The poorest, lowest classes, the serfs and villeins, were of course the greatest sufferers from the selfish injustices of the upper classes; yet in those lower classes there were some egos capable of perceiving these injustices and of rousing their more ignorant and despairing fellows to resist their oppressions and demand fairer treatment. In England there was a widespread effort toward freedom made by the villeinage. At the height of that Last Quarter of the 14th century, in 1381, the Adepts found at least two men who were natural leaders. John Ball became a most effective presenter of new ideas and he had winning ways with his peasant followers. It was he who coined the famous couplet:—

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

Another worker was Wat Tyler. He was able to draw up the peasants' wishes in intelligible form and to hold conferences with men of education and of a higher class. Under the leadership of these two men, the peasants marched on London and actually got possession of the city. But then the violent among them took advantage of their success, murdered some of the King's most oppressive ministers and burned a few buildings—quite sufficient rebellion to stir up the fears and hatred of the upper classes. These excesses were most unfortunate, for much fierce opposition was kindled against the peasants' demands, which in themselves were not unreasonable. What they really asked for was just the doing away of serfdom and servile labour, and the fixing of a fair money rent for their holdings of land. If the more turbulent men could have been restrained from bloody disturbances—from the dark shadows in their minds—much might have been accomplished. For the king and ministers actually made concessions most desirable. But through anger and treachery—the dark shadows in *their* minds—brought out in the upper classes, Wat Tyler was murdered while in a conference; and his followers, by lying promises, were persuaded to return home, believing that the rulers would keep their word. But though they carried with them the written pledges of the rulers, the peasants, after leaving London free, were hunted

down and put to death. This particular dark shadow was black indeed. Yet the outcome cannot be regarded as a failure of the Adept Effort. For soon the nobles began to find that unwilling labour was not really profitable; concessions were slowly made, and villeinage was practically removed from England, though it took a hundred years.

That peasants' revolt was one result of the enlightening given by John Wyclif. Wyclif was a most important contributor to that Line of Influence spread by Frederick II of Sicily and bridged to Wyclif by Marsilio of Padua and his book. Wyclif's own influence in England during his life gradually broadened into benefit for all classes. But the young king, Richard I, and some of his followers, who were really responsible for the failure of the peasants' hopes, were not wise enough to handle any better their difficulties with the nobles and with Parliament. So it came about that under Richard's successor, Henry of Lancaster, the Adept Work received even a harsher shock in the almost complete destroying of Wyclif's popular preachers' results among the poor. Afterwards, England suffered a kind of blood purge through the wars between two royal houses, which prevented for a time much open effect on English life of the Adept Influence. Single efforts by individual men seem to have been what could be attained openly.

This line of operation, however, represented by Frederick II, Marsilio and Wyclif, was continued in Bohemia. For the brilliant development of the court, city and university of Prague under King Charles IV (from 1350 on) was not only based on previous Adept Work in Western Europe, but was reinforced by Their Activity through Wyclif in the last part of the 14th century. To Bohemia, partly because of the English-Bohemian royal marriage, went some of the finest results of Wyclif's reforms in England. The dark shadow following this Bohemian Innovation was the blind stupidity which led the Church leaders at the Council of Constance (early 15th century) to start a thorough destruction of the reform movement—which King Sigismund had at least partly countenanced—and to do nothing better with the courageous Bohemian reformers than to burn them to death, overriding Sigismund's promise of safe-conduct to John Hus. But the reforming processes were not killed. They smouldered, till Luther, another century later, blew them once more into flame.

An allied form taken by the Manasic Enlightenment was a general change in civil relationships between men and countries. In the earlier middle ages there was no *national* sentiment, such as grows from oneness in language and country. There was more sympathy between the peasantry of different lands than between the lower classes of one country and the upper classes of that same country. But the fact of brotherhood imparted by the Manasic Light became a means of arousing a kinship among those born in one region and with one mother tongue. The previous cleavage by class was softened and transformed into a broader growth toward higher unity or nationalism. The submissiveness to papal authority and to small feudal overlordships gradually changed to loyalty to kings and to groups of rulers, such as parliaments, drawn from among the people themselves, belonging to large divisions of territory and possessing the same traditions, interests and government. Those who were striving for the supreme worldly power of Church and Pope did not welcome these changes. And of course the spirit of greed and war affected the rising young nations about as much as it had affected the earlier feudal divisions. Hence the centuries of the Renaissance and the Reformation were filled with wars both religious and political, each reacting on the other and complicating most confusedly the development of Europe.

These wars were some of the dark shadows following the Innovations. Yet the separativeness and aggression existing between the young nations was to some extent overcome, through the Manasic Light, and broadened to embrace *inter*national aims and leagues of parties or nations for mutual support; or, even, on the other hand, interpreted negatively, the Light might expand the war spirit by doubling the number of the enemy!

It is a fact that the most remarkable of these international activities was such an expansion of

conflict—the conflict between Spain, France and Germany for the control of Italy.

This struggle was less religious than political, yet there can be no doubt that the Church tried to make it an effective weapon for its own support. The opposition by the Adepts to that Church purpose must have been very active, though so secret that Their definite use of political events to mould the outcome of rulers' plans remained unimaginable by anybody. The forwarding of Their aims by events created by men themselves, who continued utterly unaware of any other influence, constitutes for students of Theosophy the special wonder and value of the period.

To weave Spain into this complicated Working of the Adepts, some remarks must be made about Spanish history. That history just preceding the period viewed is unusual and interesting because of its great and dramatic contrasts. The fine culture created in the land by the Moors was undervalued and condemned by the Christian populations, and the open war between the two religions ended only at the close of the 15th century (1492) with the expulsion of the Mohammedans.

Throughout the later decades the Work of the Adepts in Spain may well have been to support the unifying of many small kingdoms under a single rule of greater power, fitted to be a factor in the struggle, which They must have foreseen, in the main body of Europe between religions and politics. The motive of the Spanish rulers in the uniting of kingdoms was of course the gaining of added power; the motive of the Adepts would have been the possibility of turning that power toward the religious purification of Europe. Though the rulers were selfish, there was some hope of good results from the union of provinces.

The marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile in 1469 assured the uniting of those two important kingdoms into a single State. This Spanish State became too the ruler of Sicily and Naples, which made Spain for a time the dominant power in Italy. Great wealth flowed to Spain from its gaining of power in America; but its conquests there were so cruelly wicked that they carried much evil Karma; for nowhere have the ruling classes been more insolently proud and more unjustly oppressive to the industrial classes—those who naturally would otherwise have strengthened far more the inner vitality of the country itself. Without the development of skilled labour, national conditions remained slow and backward. That was one dark shadow following the Innovation that might have unified the many kingdoms into greater brotherliness.

It was with another marriage, however, that the power of Spain rose to full height—the marriage of the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, with her rich inheritances, to Philip of Burgundy, whose son, Charles, the grandson of Maximilian, of the Austrian Hapsburg House, remained Emperor till 1519. Because of this marriage their son became not only the Emperor Charles V, but also, as Charles I, the King of Spain.

Meanwhile other things of great importance were happening in Germany. A young peasant monk named Martin Luther was coming to the fore. Luther had many of the faults of his peasant birth, but he also had great talents and made such good use of them and of the university education which his father's sacrifices helped him to acquire that he attracted the favourable attention of his Prince, Frederick the Wise.

From the Adept point of view, it would seem, Luther became the key figure in that international conflict over Italy. For around him were slowly focused the spiritual and religious agitations of all Germany, particularly of the north. Saxony lies well to the north of the country, and in the north of Europe generally the populations were still much more affected by their ancient inheritance of Teutonic independence of spirit and hence were less under the domination of the Church and less touched by the Southern Renaissance, with its many possibilities of moral degeneration.

To the Theosophist, this difference between North and South Europe is significant; since in the north, from the beginning of man's history,

lies the special locale and concentration of Spirit in evolution as distinct from Matter. Therefore the peoples who remained in the north, though slower in the development of material physical comforts and called backward, proved themselves to have been more retentive of spiritual possibilities. Without the moral stamina characteristic of the north, the great Adept Movement might have accomplished, and still may accomplish, much less than otherwise.

Luther exemplified that moral stamina. Yet he also was a source of the particular slowness in growth of spiritual understanding noticeable in the Reformation. Intended by his education to be a successful man of the world and a lawyer, his suddenly becoming a monk may have been due to that deep moral nature properly his by environment as well as by egoic heritage. Having perceived the inner deadness of his previous aims, becoming a monk seemed then the legitimate way to live the deeper life he felt.

In fact, to understand Luther and his mixture of good and poor results, one has to recognize the great conventionality existing in his mind, along with all his talents. In spite of his rebellions against the old, that conventionality profoundly affected all he did. To explain: In his earlier monkhood he suffered intensely from a sense of sin. To gain relief he faithfully practised customary monkish "mortifications of the flesh" and the "searching of the scriptures." At last from that devoted following of the old churchly teaching, a strong conviction came that neither he nor any man could "gain salvation" merely by such "good works." Instead, it was by entirely unquestioning acceptance of the teaching that "Christ's atonement" for sin was alone efficacious for "salvation." The coming to Luther of that conviction brought him peace of mind. He felt this so deeply that it seemed like something new. He called it "Justification by faith." He had no idea of departing from the old, only the purpose to give it fresh emphasis. By this new emphasis he sought to bring to other men the new peace he himself felt. It is important for us to see this conventionality—this carrying over of the old theology into the so-called Reformation, or we shall fail to estimate the obstacles to be met by the Adept Manasic Light.

In the University then recently founded in the town of Wittenberg Luther was given a professorship in 1508, and in 1510 he was sent to Rome on a special mission. It was hardly accidental that Luther's zealous piety should thus meet the shock of the moral and churchly-political conditions under Pope Leo X. The contrast with his ideals of true Church and religious practice must have sown in Luther's mind many seeds of future growth for him and for Germany. But though he mourned what he saw, he had no thought of a break with the established order.

A change came, however, in 1517 when a preacher and seller of indulgences began work in Luther's vicinity. At that time the sale of indulgences was going on professionally for raising funds to rebuild the Church of St. Peter at Rome. The selling of them went on with much profit. The theory underlying indulgences gives ample proof of the moral dry-rot into which the thinking of religious leaders had passed. According to this, the purity and spiritual power exercised by the holy lives of Christ and many saints had built up for the use of the Church a kind of bank of spirituality. On this bank the Pope could draw cheques, which would offset and pay for the sins of a man, so that his otherwise long period of purification in purgatory would be lessened or even avoided entirely. Men of wealth or of rank became eager purchasers of these cheques; and, among the poor, pitiable sacrifices were made to own them, both for the buyers themselves and for their relatives suffering in purgatory. The purveyor who came into Luther's neighbourhood had no scruples and possessed much skilful salesmanship. He is reported to have said, "As soon as the money rattles in the box, the soul flies out of purgatory." These practices with indulgences were too much for Luther's rapidly growing demands for inner religious purification.

According to a custom of scholars, he posted on the church door at Wittenberg a large number of theses or propositions for discussion, which attacked the sale of indulgences and demanded

stronger faith in Christ's atonement. To his astonishment, the theses when printed quickly spread throughout Germany. He soon had powerful opponents, both because of the loss in revenue if indulgences were given up, and because of the danger that reformers, through Luther's logic, would reject the whole teaching of mediatorship between God and man by Church and priest. These results could not be allowed, and the ruling clergy determined to silence Luther.

But Luther was living very intensely in those days, and it did not take him long to see that his new opinions were the same as those for which John Hus and Jerome of Bohemia had suffered death by fire; and he was deeply convinced that they were true.

It was a startling realization. Yet Luther was not checked. In less than three years he passed from a thought-arousing critic to an outspoken rebel; and he expressed his views with such power that many other men could not but adopt them. In 1520 he published statements that put him quite outside the Roman Church. Among his heretical statements then and later put forward he declared the Bible the sole authority for Christian truth. He rejected the headship of the popes and taught that "all Christian believers are priests," which meant that a believer had all the powers that any priest possessed. He declared too that vows taken by monks and nuns had no binding force and that monasteries should be abolished. And of the seven "holy sacraments" so insisted on by the clergy, he rejected all but three.

A few months after these views appeared, the Pope issued his bull of excommunication against Luther. What could save him from the fate of Hus? The most dramatic moments of the early Reformation and of Luther's life were approaching. There must have been much sense of humour in Luther and his sympathizers when they piled copies of the Pope's bull of condemnation and other objectionable documents and burned them.

Political conditions had greatly changed; the Emperor Maximilian had died the year before and Charles V, King of Spain, was now Emperor of Germany. Charles was a loyal Catholic, and he had announced the holding of an imperial Diet at Worms in Germany. Luther, though already excommunicated by the papal bull, was given by Charles permission under an imperial safe-conduct to appear before the Diet to answer for his views. His friends warned him of his danger, but he replied, "If there were as many devils at Worms as there are tiles upon the roof, I would go there."

It is safe to assume that his friend and Prince, Frederick the Wise (whose life proves his deserving of that popular title), also went to that Diet, on which hung the religious fate of Luther, of Frederick's duchy of Saxony, and of Germany. When Luther was asked to recant his views, he said he could not because they were based on his study of the Bible, on his reason and his conscience. It could not be right to disobey these.

Perhaps in the hundred years since the burning of John Hus for such staunchness, the outpouring of Manasic Light had somewhat affected the minds of even churchmen. Or perhaps Charles, conscious of his own vast possessions on earth, was less hypnotized by clerical claims of power with Heaven than the Emperor Sigismund had been when he broke his promise of safe-conduct to Hus—though he had blushed with shame when Hus looked reproachfully at him while on his head was fixed the black cap of condemnation. At any rate, whatever the thought was, Charles did not break his promise of safe-conduct. Though the ban of the empire was passed against Luther, he was allowed to leave the Diet. When he was outside, he suddenly disappeared! Was he not under the guardianship of Great Powers? His work, though little compared with what was needed, must have been too important to the Adepts to be allowed to fail. Only a few of Duke Frederick's most trusty men knew that he was safely concealed in one of the Duke's strong castles of defence. There he lived in quiet for over a year, broken by one incognito visit to Wittenberg, employing his time in translating the New Testament, so that the common people might read the basis of their religion in the German of the home and the street, and in polemical writings.

After about a year Luther left his retreat and returned to Wittenberg to regulate what he considered the excesses of some other reformers. At this time he established the church now bearing his name, which came to be adopted throughout the north of Europe. In the southern and western part of the country too his reforms were popular, but they were checked by a great revolt among the peasants. These, like those of England in Wyclif's time, had long been unjustly treated by the ruling classes and asked for lower dues to their lords and for the abolition of serfdom.

But Luther, less broad-minded than Wyclif, denied any man's right to revolt against his lawful lord, and he was afraid to mix social and political questions with religious reform. He did not see that both are vital to life. Hence he urged the nobles to root out all revolt. In his excitement he cried, "Slay, Stab, Burn!" It is hard to think that Luther, a peasant himself, knowing the bitter trials of that class, could turn against his blood brothers with such blind fury. Thousands of peasants were slain in battle or were executed; and the peasantry of that section of Europe was denied its legitimate social aspirations. This was the black shadow lingering in Luther's own mind—the religious ignorance and self-pride that were part of his response to the Manasic Light and to the positive outward Aid that seems to have been given him so generously.

What had become of the Ancient Teaching of True Pantheism—that every being is divine in Essence and that therefore there is actual Identity of Man and Deity, and consequently the positive, logical, fundamental Brotherhood of all beings? Where were the workings of Pico della Mirandola's philosophical rediscovery of Man's God-given Freedom? Where were any results of the Platonic revival by the Florentine Academy? Alas, the "Reformation" knew nothing of these things. The reformers, though scholars, did not consider these philosophies. Only here and there men like Erasmus and Bruno could *grasp* them, so blinding still was the pall of conventionality and Old Churchliness. The "Reformation" was indeed too much only a *re-formation* of Repetition and Convention. And from the re-formations then made sprang the churches which to this present day have kept alive those old falsities! How the hearts of the Adepts must have ached to see men stupidly repeating the errors of centuries, supporting and continuing with their very life-blood what they should have destroyed, *i.e.*, their false low ideas, instead of recognizing and supporting their fellow human beings!

And yet, the Adepts did not turn away from the "Reformation" or from Luther. His work, poor as it must have been in Their sight, was for Europe and at that time too valuable not to be given all the compassionate aid that men's own actions permitted. Besides, in other phases of his thought, Luther had already proved himself a carrier of the Line of Influence toward the True Democracy of Man which was maintained from Frederick II of Sicily through Marsilio of Padua and Wyclif, through Bohemia and John Hus, to some regulations of the Lutheran Church and to the men who, like Luther, suggested and upheld them. Through these, True Democracy, meeting in the north the old-time spirit of independence, gave to Northern Europe conditions which it might otherwise have been long in gaining.

After the Diet at Worms in 1521, which passed the Edict of Heresy against Luther, Emperor Charles returned to Germany occasionally, presiding from 1530 on at several diets or conferences which he hoped would bring about the reunion of the Church. He dared not use force against the Lutherans because he needed both Lutherans and Catholics to repel the onsets on his eastern border by the Ottoman Turks, whom all Christendom feared, while the central executive in Germany had too little force—or perhaps too little desire—to make the papal bull and the imperial ban against Luther effective. In those years the Reformation took firm root.

Charles had asked for a religious Council at Trent to hear the German cause. The Pope summoned that Council but then called upon it to adjourn to Bologna, where the papal influence could be stronger. After four years of skilful diplomacy, Charles secured the return of the Council to Trent. But then, to the surprise of

everybody, the new French king made a sudden turn. Though a Catholic, he formed a league with the German Protestant princes by which, for money aid to them, he could take possession of some fortresses on the border of France, thus extending his power. In the struggle that ensued, Charles himself was almost taken prisoner. These things were too much for his endurance. He had been fighting German Protestants for nearly 30 years. Luther himself had passed peacefully away. That third check came as a series of blows indeed. Charles was too tired to continue. In 1555–6 he gave up his many crowns and retired to a house attached to a monastery, where two years later he died—less perhaps from age or illness than from a sense of defeat.

Germany and Luther and, we may add, the Adept Innovation had triumphed. Yet the closing of that cycle overlapped far into the next. The dark shadows following on the triumph were largely massed in the arousing of fresh power in the Church, especially through the revival of the Inquisition. That body was now so strengthened that it practically destroyed all heresy, that is, all independent thinking, in southern Europe.

But, in a deep sense, that international conflict between Spain and France for power in Italy was really a struggle between the Pope and Luther, in which the Overseeing Adepts may well have played a significant part, a struggle between freedom of thought and priestly domination. As such an Effort for Human Liberty it has a place in the history of the Theosophical Movement.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT—1875-1950

XII.—"THE ROYAL TALISMAN"

Judge wrote in 1888, nearly 13 years after the founding of the Theosophical Society, that it had become an entity with a sensibility shared by each member and a mental power derived from many quarters. If that was true of the Society then, it is equally true of the U.L.T. today and, to the extent that we work heart and soul to carry out the policy of the U.L.T., to that extent must we share in its life. Through our share in that life we must derive increasingly as 1975 approaches a sense of the rising tide of events, just as we can sense the coming of spring before there is any visible movement of nature. We cannot see the Masters, or all the changes in men's hearts and minds which constitute the cycle, but if the Masters are the throbbing heart of our Movement and we form part of its body, then through the nerves of that body we must feel the movement at the centre as well as in all its parts.

The future, therefore, should bring an increasing sense of great enterprises afoot. Yet, while high enterprises call upon imagination, faith, courage and determination, they require in equal measure careful preparation of the equipment for the task and continual exercise of good judgment. If, for example, in the successful Everest expedition there had not been careful preparation of the equipment for the undertaking and continual exercise of good judgment in the light of the assimilated experience of the past, it would have been foolhardy and not heroic.

By and large we do not approach our even greater task with the same seriousness of purpose as that of the members of that expedition, the same meticulous attention to detail, the same careful preparation of (in our case emotional and mental) equipment, the same care to learn as much as possible from the experiences of predecessors. But, unless we do this, how shall we be able to exercise that good judgment on which, H.P.B. has told us, the future success of the Movement will to a great extent depend?

There is another lesson which we can learn from the success of that expedition. While many other men would have been overcome with a sense of the stupendousness of the task, the members of the expedition did not doubt that Everest

would ultimately be conquered, if not by them, then by their successors. They did not, therefore, as they climbed, measure themselves constantly in terms of the advance achieved, but went on climbing with the summit as their goal, in the faith that there could be no difficulty that steady perseverance and human ingenuity could not ultimately overcome. In a certain restricted sense they had unswerving faith in the Law of Karma.

This faith in the Law of Karma can also be described as faith in the power of duty persistently followed to overcome all obstacles, and this faith was possibly the supreme characteristic of Judge. Duty he described as the panacea, the royal talisman, and under many different circumstances did he confirm this faith. He confirmed it when he was working almost alone in America. He confirmed it in the circumstances of doubt and despair through which the Path takes the disciple, for he could write in a letter to a friend:—

> Just stay loyal and true, and look for the indications of your own duty, not meddling with others, and you will find the road easier. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed., p. 138)

He confirmed it at a time when the dark powers were trying to create a *maya* by which to lead astray members of the Society, for he wrote:—

> By gentleness, detachment, strict attention to duty, and retiring now and then to the quiet place bring up good currents and keep back all evil ones. Remember it is the little things the work is done through, for they are not noticed, while the larger ones draw the eyes and minds of all. (*Letters*, p. 89)

Times at which oneself or another is unjustly attacked have their own peculiar difficulties for one who is trying to follow strictly the indications of duty from day to day. If it is our duty to endure patiently injustice to our personal selves, duty demands that we shall not stand passively by when injustice is done to another; and in either case the natural impulse to counterattack has to be resisted. Hence the wisdom of considering carefully how Judge acted in such circumstances, trying to relate it to basic principles of Theosophy.

Judge did not seek to justify himself by counterattack. He might easily have tried to do so by pressing a proposal actually made in a resolution unanimously adopted at the American Convention of April 1894. It was to the effect that in the event of an investigation to decide whether or not Judge was in communication with the Mahatmas, and whether or not he had misused Their names and handwriting, a similar investigation should be held in regard to Colonel Olcott, Sinnett, Annie Besant and others. Instead he accepted it as his duty towards members of the Society and his accusers in particular to do what he could to clarify the fundamental issues involved. In his conduct of affairs and in his written statements he tried to bring out the essential freedom of belief that must be given to members of the Society, while placing on record his own belief that the Masters were living men and that They assisted the cause of the Theosophical Society and made fruitful the work of all sincere members. He also tried to help the members to understand that no one could prove objectively to another the existence of the Masters and the genuineness of messages purporting to be from Them. Each had to develop his own soul powers by the course prescribed in all ages before he could know of these things himself. Meanwhile one could only make a preliminary judgment as to whether or not another was an agent of the Masters, by his works.

Had Judge descended from the plane of duty to that of personalities, the result would have been disastrous to the Movement. While the Society would still have split in two, each part following its own chosen leaders, there would perhaps have been no U.L.T., no republication of the works of H.P.B. and now her name might be little known. And Theosophy might be almost completely identified in the minds of all who heard of it with the hotch-potch of beliefs and psychism with which, as it is, so many associate it today.

The task of educing a true understanding of the Masters and Their work would have appeared far more overwhelming to Judge had he measured himself against the task so far completed than

Everest would have appeared to its would-be conquerors if they had done the same. But he placed his faith in the Law of Karma and in the Masters who are the embodiments of that Law. He carried on in the conviction that present duty could bring no difficulty which quiet, steady persistence in the light of the experiences of past ages, as recorded by the Masters, could not overcome, and that the performance of that present duty was an essential step in the upward trail to the summit.

Looking back over the past years of our Movement it is possible to see Judge's selflessness, his quiet performance of duty and his unswerving faith in our power to overcome all difficulties if we but put our trust in the Law, as essential factors in the progress of the Movement in general. They were obviously such in the conception, birth and growth of the U.L.T. in particular, with the possibility it holds within itself of keeping unbroken the link with the Masters until the coming of the next Messenger.

If through our share in the life of the U.L.T. we feel something of the rising tide of the Movement in the coming years, if we can glimpse the great goal of the Movement as the members of the expedition first glimpsed the peak of Everest, then let us also remember the path of small, plain duties faithfully performed, which will lead step by step to the summit. Let us remember, also, that our highest duty in the present hour is our duty to the Masters in the field of service open to us in the U.L.T.

There is indeed a talismanic power in the simple tasks of the U.L.T. performed with all the devotion and skill of which we are capable. For example, we may be asked by the student conducting a study class to give a summary of the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* within a certain number of minutes, keeping strictly to the material in H.P.B.'s statement and avoiding illustrations or explanations of our own. Then, having accepted the assignment, it is our duty to do that which we are asked to do, within the limits of our ability. It may seem a trivial matter that we slip in just one illustration of our own because it appears to us so especially apt, or that we continue for half a minute over the stated time because we believe it impossible to include all the essential points in a shorter period. But by doing either of these things we miss the magic in that duty. It is like retaining the husk of a seed and throwing away the germ which contains the future plant or the spiritual power to present Theosophy with the same originality and force as Judge did or to grasp the essentials of a situation at a time of stress and to act wisely in terms of them, as Judge did during the campaign against him.

We have the word of one of the Masters that the daily and hourly performance of duty is no small thing, that through small, plain duties faithfully fulfilled we shall rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity. It was by just such means that Judge rose to his large measure of duty to Mankind, faithfully fulfilled, that he was able to act towards his detractors with the charity and the largeness of mind which have meant so much to the Movement.

Let *us* seek the plans of the Masters as they are partially revealed to us in the unfolding work of the Movement, so that something of their grandeur of conception may lift us above preoccupation with our own trivial schemes. But let us also redouble *our* efforts to perform our small, plain duties with devotion and with skill.

We are all members of one body, and the man who endeavours to supplant and destroy another man is like the right hand seeking to cut off the left through jealousy. He who kills another slays himself; he who steals from another defrauds himself; he who wounds another maims himself; for others exist in us and we in them.

—Eliphas Levi

THE MAYAS AND THE "POPOL VUH'

I.—THE MAYAS

The English version of the *Popol Vuh*, the sacred book of the ancient Quiché Mayas, made available by Adrian Recinos a few years ago, has been followed up by him, with the assistance of Delia Goetz, with the translation into English of another important Maya document, *The Annals of the Cakchiquels*. Recorded originally by some members of the ancient Xahila family of the Cakchiquel Mayas, *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* purports to be an account of the history of this branch of the ancient Mayas, from the very beginning up to the Spanish conquest and the first century of colonization. The opening pages of these *Annals* describe the creation of man and record legends of the early races similar to, though not so comprehensive as, those of the *Popol Vuh* of the Quiché Mayas. This blending of the mythological stories of creation with the racial history of one's own community was a wide-spread practice, as is evidenced by the Jewish Bible itself.

Two other ancient Quiché documents have been translated into English by Delia Goetz: one, *Title of the Lords of Totonicapan,* is published together with the *Annals,* and the other, a *Paper Concerning the Origin of the Lords,* was published with the *Popol Vuh*. These four documents are practically all that remains of the ancient Maya literature in Guatemala. The Mayas in Yucatan had similar records called the *Books of Chilam Balam,* that is, books of the prophets or oracles of hidden things. A small number of these has survived; for example, *The Book of the Jaguar Priest* is a recently published translation in English of the *Book of Chilam Balam* of Tizimin.

All these manuscripts of the three Maya nations were written in the Latin characters their scribes had learnt from the Spaniards. The MSS. are recognized as trustworthy copies of part at least of the hieroglyphic records which were practically all destroyed by the fanatical zeal of the Spanish missionaries. Bishop Landa was chiefly responsible for the wholesale burning of these records in the early days of the conquest of Mexico. Strangely enough, he had himself received from the Maya priests some instruction in reading the characters, and it was from the papers left by him that was ultimately found the chief key by which the later hieroglyphs have been deciphered.

The *Popol Vuh*, being the most important of the manuscripts, requires detailed treatment. Father Francisco Ximénez, a Dominican friar, secured possession of this document late in the 17th century. He made a Spanish translation and an exact transcript of the text, using the Latin script, but his manuscript lay in Guatemala for a century and a half. It was brought to light by two scholars, one of whom, Abbé C. E. Brasseur de Bourbourg, published in Paris in 1861 a translation into French, together with the Quiché text of Father Ximénez. This publication attracted considerable attention in the academic world and among Christian religionists, for the text disclosed that in earlier times there had apparently been a connection between America and the Middle East and Europe. This confirmed the idea in the minds of some Bible apologists that the American Indians were the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel.

The importance of the *Popol Vuh* was pointed out by H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled* in 1877, as we shall see presently, and later, English versions from the pens of two Theosophists appeared, based on de Bourbourg's translation. One was published in *Lucifer* in 1894–5, a partial translation under the title "The Book of the Azure Veil" by James M. Pryse; the other, a complete translation by Kenneth S. Guthrie, was published in *The Word* in 1905–7. Public interest in these Maya people and other Mexican nations developed slowly, and the work of pioneers such as Dr. and Mme. Le Plongeon was ignored. But during this century, more especially since the first world war, considerable interest has sprung up, much excavation has been carried on and laborious attempts have been made towards deciphering the sculp-

tured hieroglyphs and interpreting to some extent the culture of these surprisingly advanced civilizations of Central America. While a considerable amount of literature has appeared and much has been disclosed, the real mystery remains unrevealed, for only about one-third of the hieroglyphs have been deciphered. These relate only to the later calendrical inscriptions, leaving the far earlier ones undeciphered.

As this later interest has been chiefly archæological, attention has veered away from the earlier speculations about America's relations with Europe in ancient times to the cultural development of the Mayas in America itself. One item that has greatly intrigued scholars and scientists is the wonderfully precise calendar system the Mayas had evolved and the erection of innumerable dated monuments to mark the passage of their time-cycles. The significance of the latter's function in determining when there would be a cyclic return of events has been passed over and only the factual calculations and dates have been appreciated. Similarly the vital clue furnished by the early mythological stories and the personal names of people and places in which that clue is concealed has also been left unfathomed and the data have been utilized only for the interpretation of the local movements and migrations of the peoples on the soil of America itself.

The earlier approach of Brasseur de Bourbourg and others, namely, the comparative study of the documents in the light of ancient Jewish, Assyrian, Babylonian and other histories, although now ignored, has considerable value. It was to that interpretation that H.P.B. furnished many clues in *Isis Unveiled*. An important point in those days was the existence of pre-Adamite humanities, and the *Popol Vuh* furnished many corroborations of her teachings thereon. On the second page of Volume I of *Isis Unveiled* she drew attention to what the *Popol Vuh* said of an early race "that could reason and speak, whose sight was unlimited, and who knew all things at once." In the same volume she writes of de Bourbourg's translation as follows:—

> Notwithstanding the labour of Brasseur de Bourbourg, and his elaborate translation of the famous *Popol Vuh*, alleged to be written by Ixtlilxochitl, after weighing its contents, the antiquarian remains as much in the dark as ever. We have read the *Popol Vuh* in its original translation, and the review of the same by Max Müller, and out of the former find shining a light of such brightness, that it is no wonder that the matter-of-fact, skeptical scientists should be blinded by it.... Professor Müller confesses that "now and then...one imagines one sees certain periods and landmarks, but in the next page all is chaos again." May it not be barely possible that this chaos is intensified by the fact that most of the scientists, directing the whole of their attention to history, skip that which they treat as "vague, contradictory, miraculous, absurd." (I. 548)

Max Müller had, in his review, compared the *Popol Vuh* to the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. H.P.B. contends that even in these tales anything would be worthy of attention if it should help towards the demonstration of some truth, and she instances Homer's *Odyssey* with all its "fantastic nonsense" now recognized to mean something more than the creation of the old poet's fancy. She further states:—

> If the consecutive attempts at the creation of man described in the *Quiche Cosmogony* suggest no comparison with some Apocrypha, with the Jewish sacred books, and the kabalistic theories of creation, it is indeed strange. Even the *Book of Jasher*, condemned as a gross forgery of the twelfth century, may furnish more than one clew to trace a relation between the population of Ur of the Kasdeans, where Magism flourished before the days of Abraham, and those of Central and North America. The divine beings, "brought down to the level of human nature," perform no feats or tricks more strange or incredible than the miraculous performances of Moses and of Pharaoh's magicians, while many of these are exactly similar in their nature. And when, moreover, in addition to this latter fact, we find so great a resemblance between certain kabalistic terms common to both hemispheres, there must be something else than mere accident to account for the circumstance. Many of such feats have clearly a common parentage. The story of the two brothers of Central America, who, before starting on their journey to Xibalba, "plant each a cane in the middle of their grandmother's house, that she may know by its flourishing or withering whether they are alive or dead," finds its analogy in the beliefs of many other countries. (I. 549-550)

Max Müller had noted that the Mexicans, like the Hindus, referred to a lunar eclipse as "the moon being devoured by a dragon," but he thought that

it "need not be the result of any historical intercourse." H.P.B. says: "It may be accounted for ... by the once universal heliolatrous religion. There was a time when Asia, Europe, Africa, and America were covered with the temples sacred to the sun and the dragons" (I. 550). She instances the stories of Bel and the Dragon, Osiris and Typhon, Apollo and Python, which have their equivalents in Russian folklore and similar characters in the Mexican legends, extending to the minutest details. Referring to the Books of the Egyptian Hermes Trismegistus, of which only a few portions are extant, H.P.B. says:—

> Now, if by carefully looking over the kabalistical works, which are all derived from that universal storehouse of esoteric knowledge, we find the facsimiles of many so-called miracles wrought by magical art, equally reproduced by the Quichés; and if even in the fragments left of the original *Popol Vuh*, there is sufficient evidence that the religious customs of the Mexicans, Peruvians, and other American races are nearly identical with those of the ancient Phœnicians, Babylonians, and Egyptians; and if, moreover, we discover that many of their religious terms have etymologically the same origin; how are we to avoid believing that they are the descendants of those whose forefathers "fled before the brigand, Joshua, the son of Nun"? (I. 551)

This reference to Joshua appears in an inscription in Phœnician characters on a pillar in Mauritania, but the Biblical story of Joshua is itself but a distorted copy of much earlier happenings. Early Maya writers corroborate what H.P.B. says about the extant *Popol Vuh* being only a portion of the original, and the writer of the manuscript himself admits this. Speaking of the marvellous powers of insight and foreknowledge of the ancient kings, the writer says that they well knew "there was a place where they could see everything, and a book of all, which they called Book of the Community" —that is, the *Popol Vuh*. In the Preamble the writer also says:—

> ...we shall bring it to light because now the *Popol Vuh*, as it is called, cannot be seen any more, in which was clearly seen the coming from the other side of the sea and the narration of our obscurity, and our life was clearly seen. The original book, written long ago, existed, but its sight is hidden to the searcher and to the thinker.

Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl also says that all the chronicles of the Toltecs were gathered together in a "Divine Book," the *Teoamoxtli*, which contained the legends of the creation of the world, the emigration of those peoples from Asia, the dynasty of their rulers, etc. In his *Obras Historicas* he also remarks that each tribe compiled carefully its annals, noting the month, day and hour of the events of each year. As already stated, these records were not merely historical data but were intended to serve as an actual guide to the succession of events when the cycle came round again.

All the Quiché and Cakchiquel manuscripts tell the same story of the emigration from Asia. Thus the *Title of the Lords of Totonicapan* says that the three Quiché nations or tribes "came from where the sun rises, descendants of Israel, of the same language and the same customs," and the writers further testify that their ancestors "came from the other part of the sea, from Civan-Tulan, bordering on Babylonia." Introducing the manuscript, its translator tells us:—

> The manuscript assumes that the three great Quiché nations with which it particularly deals are descendants of the Ten Tribes of the Kingdom of Israel, whom Shalmaneser reduced to perpetual captivity and who, finding themselves on the border of Assyria, resolved to emigrate.

The text of the document tells us that when they rose from Civan-Tulan under their first leader, Balam-Qitzé, and arrived at the edge of the sea,

> Balam-Qitzé touched it with his staff and at once a path opened, which then closed up again, for thus the great God wished it to be done, because they were the sons of Abraham and Jacob. So it was that those three nations passed through, and with them thirteen others called Vukamag (the seven tribes).

Naturally there are not wanting those who say that the Mayas have merely incorporated this story from what their Spanish conquerors told them, but there are others who think otherwise and believe that the Quiché records are independently derived. But a line of interpretation has already been indicated whereby the Biblical stories are themselves to be regarded as far more ancient traditions than those of the Jewish race, who have merely dressed these tales up in the garb of Israelitic patriarchs.

On this subject H.P.B. says in *Isis Unveiled*:—

> All the legends of the creation, the fall of man, and the resultant deluge, belong to universal history, and are no more the property of the Israelites than that of any other nation....The primitive history of Judea is a distortion of Indian fable engrafted on that of Egypt. ...The identity of the Bible with the legends of the Hindu sacred books and the cosmogonies of other nations, must be demonstrated....Otherwise, whence such strange "coincidences" in the respective histories of nations and peoples so widely thrown apart? Whence that identity of primitive conceptions which, fables and legends though they are termed now, contain in them nevertheless the kernel of historical facts... ? (II. 469, 471; I. 122)

Of the Biblical stories she says, after comparing them with both Hindu and Scandinavian legends of giants:—

> The same groundwork underlies the Grecian fables about the Titans; and may be found in the legend of the Mexicans—the four successive races of *Popol Vuh*. (I. 122)

Don Juan Torres, grandson of the last Quiché king, is another early Maya writer referred to by H.P.B. A manuscript attributed to him, says H.P.B., states that

> ...the Toltecas themselves descended from the house of Israel, who were released by Moses, and who, after crossing the Red Sea, fell into idolatry. After that, having separated themselves from their companions, and under the guidance of a chief named Tanub, they set out wandering, and from one continent to another they came to a place named the Seven Caverns, in the Kingdom of Mexico, where they founded the famous town of Tula, etc. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 552)

Adrian Recinos identifies Tula as the ancient Toltec capital whose ruins may be seen not far from Mexico City, in the State of Hidalgo. He also traces, in his introduction to the *Popol Vuh*, the long wanderings of the tribes across Central America to their final abodes in Guatemala. This need not deter anyone, however, from detecting much earlier history hidden in the same records. The text of the Cakchiquel *Annals* says:—

> From four [places], the people came to Tulan. In the east is one Tulan; another in Xibalbay; another in the west, from there we came ourselves, from the west; and another is where God is. Therefore, there were four Tulans, oh, our sons!

Omitting the Tula where God is and Xibalbay, that is, the "subterranean kingdom of great power and magnificence," we are left with two Tulas, one in the East and the other in the West. The name Tula finds mention in all Maya manuscripts, whether of the Quichés or of the Cakchiquels, or in the Yucatan *Books of Chilam Balam*. The *Popol Vuh* gives the name as "Tulan-Zuiva, Vucub-Pec, Vucub-Zivan," which means the cave of Tulan, the seven caves, and the seven ravines. The use of the number seven carries its own significance. It occurs in many places throughout the *Popol Vuh*. It will be remembered that the first fundamental proposition of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* posits "the simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe," and H.P.B., commenting on these names, says in *The Secret Doctrine*:—

> These *seven caves, seven cities*, etc., etc., stand in every case for the seven centres, or zones, upon which the seven primitive groups of the first Root-race were born. (II. 35 fn.)

To return, however, to the question whether the Mayas did come to America originally from the East: Recent historians, such as S. G. Morley in *The Ancient Maya*, trace the Mayas in Central America, by means of the dated monuments as well as by the written records, to the fourth century A.D. A distinction is drawn between the Old Empire (A.D. 317-987) and the New Empire (A.D. 987-1527). But the question remains regarding the still earlier origins to which these records so curiously yet so uniformly refer. The modern writers merely take the view that there was no emigration at all from the East and that all the wanderings took place in America itself. But this leaves many things unexplained; for example, the "coincidence" of names such as Balam, which in the *Popol Vuh* is the most conspicuous name of the ancestors and later of the kings of the Quichés. This name, H.P.B. says, is "pre-eminently Chaldean, and reminding one immediately of Balaam and his human-voiced ass." She goes on to speak of other similarities:—

> Besides the statement of Lord Kingsborough, who found such a striking similarity between the language of the Aztecs (the mother tongue) and the Hebrew, many of the figures on the bas-reliefs of Palenque and

idols in *terra-cotta*, exhumed in Santa Cruz del Quiché, have on their heads bandelets with a square protuberance on them, in front of the forehead, very similar to the phylacteries worn by the Hebrew Pharisees of old, while at prayers, and even by devotees of the present day, particularly the Jews of Poland and Russia. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 553)

There is another point. H.P.B. draws a distinction between the Mayas and the far earlier occupants of the soil. Answering those who suggested that it was the Phœnician navigators who were "the progenitors of the races which built the temples and palaces of Palenque and Uxmal, of Copan and Africa," she says that, as both the Mayas and the Phœnicians were of the fifth race, therefore they cannot be considered the original builders. What H.P.B. writes in an article entitled "A Land of Mystery" (*The Theosophist*, Vol. I; reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XIII, May-August 1943), which deals chiefly with Peru, equally applies to Mexican and Guatemalan remains:—

To confound the buildings of the epoch of the Incas in Peru, and of Montezuma and his caciques, in Mexico, with the aboriginal monuments, is fatal to archæology. While Cholula, Uxmal, Quiché, Pachacamac, and Chichen were all perfectly preserved and occupied at the time of the invasion of the Spanish *banditti*, there are hundreds of ruined cities and works which were in the same state of ruin even then; whose origin was unknown to the conquered Incas and Caciques as it is to us.

The gigantic structures, H.P.B. avers, were the work of the Atlanteans of the Fourth Race at a very much earlier epoch. In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. refers to the difficulties of the archæologist, James Fergusson, who

regards the analogies between the ruins of "Inca" civilization and the Cyclopean remains of the Pelasgians in Italy and Greece as a coincidence "the most remarkable in the history of architecture." "It is difficult to resist the conclusion that there may be some relation between them." The "relation" is simply explained by the derivation of the stocks, who devised these erections, from a common centre in an Atlantic continent. The acceptance of the latter can alone assist us to approach a solution of this and similar problems in almost every branch of modern science. (II. 745-6)

H.P.B. says that

in the palmy days of the Atlantean giants, the sons of the "giants from the East," a pilgrim could perform a journey from what in our days is called the Sahara desert, to the lands which now rest in dreamless sleep at the bottom of the waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. (*S.D.*, II. 424)

The following passage from *Isis Unveiled* sums up the position:—

The perfect identity of the rites, ceremonies, traditions, and even the names of the deities, among the Mexicans and ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, are a sufficient proof of South America being peopled by a colony which mysteriously found its way across the Atlantic. When? At what period? History is silent on that point; but those who consider that there is no tradition, sanctified by ages, without a certain sediment of truth at the bottom of it, believe in the *Atlantis*-legend. There are, scattered throughout the world, a handful of thoughtful and solitary students, who pass their lives in obscurity, far from the rumours of the world, studying the great problems of the physical and spiritual universes. They have their secret records.... The knowledge of their early ancestors, the sages of India, Babylonia, Nineveh, and the imperial Thebes... —all this, and much more, is recorded on indestructible parchment....These men believe the story of Atlantis to be no fable, but maintain that at different epochs of the past huge islands, and even continents, existed where now there is but a wild waste of waters. In those submerged temples and libraries the archæologist would find, could he but explore them, the materials for filling all the gaps that now exist in what we imagine is *history*. (I. 557-8)

There remains one further line of proof available to the trained occultist in his investigation of racial derivations. It appeared in *The Theosophist* in October 1883, in reply to a question from an "English *F.T.S.*":—

While the Western historian puts together the mutilated, incomplete records of various nations and people, and makes them into a clever mosaic according to the best and most probable plan and rejects entirely traditional fables, the occultist pays not the slightest attention to the vain self-glorification of alleged conquerors or their lithic inscriptions. Nor does he follow the stray bits of so-called historical information, oft concocted by interested parties and found scattered hither and thither, in the fragments of classical writers, whose original texts themselves have often been tampered with. The Occultist follows the ethnological affinities and their divergences in the various nationalities, races and sub-races, in a more easy way; and he is guided in this as surely as the student who examines a geographical map. As the latter can easily trace by

their differently coloured outlines the boundaries of the many countries and their possessions; their geographical superficies and their separations by seas, rivers and mountains; so the Occultist can by following the (to him) well distinguishable and defined *auric shades and gradations of colour in the inner-man* unerringly pronounce to which of the several distinct human families, as also to what particular respective group, and even small sub-group of the latter belongs such or another people, tribe, or man. This will appear hazy and incomprehensible to the many who know nothing of ethnic varieties of nerve-aura and disbelieve in any "inner-man" theory, scientific but to the few. The whole question hangs upon the reality or unreality of the existence of this inner-man whom clairvoyance has discovered, and whose odyle or nerve-emanations von Reichenbach proves. If one admits such a presence and realizes intuitionally that, being closer related to the one invisible Reality, the *inner* type must be still more pronounced than the outer physical type, then it will be a matter of little, if any, difficulty to conceive our meaning. (Vol. V, pp. 6-7)

Having shown to a certain extent the relation of the Mayas to the peoples of the East, it is necessary to examine some of the passages in the *Popol Vuh* in the light of the Theosophical teachings.

II.—THE "POPOL VUH"

The *Popol Vuh* falls into four parts treating respectively of (1) the creation of the earth and of man, (2) the Mysteries and initiation trials, (3) early racial development, and (4) patriarchal guardianship, priesthood and later racial history.

The opening verse of Part I, in the translation of James M. Pryse,[1] runs as follows:—

> This is the First Book written of old, but the perception of it is hidden from him who looks with his eyes, who thinks with his brain. Marvellous was its appearance and its portrayal of the cycle in which all was formed and finished that is in the Heavens and on the Earth, the symbols of the cube and the square, the proportions of their angles and their sides, and the establishment of parallels in the Heavens and on Earth, at the four limits, at the four cardinal points, as it was ordered by the Creator and the Former, the Mother and the Father of Life, of Being, by whom all act and breathe, Life-giver and Nourisher of the initiated devotees who are the Peace of Peoples, whose wisdom has brooded over the symmetry of all that exists in the Heavens, on the earth, in the lakes and in the seas.

This is followed by a fine passage reminiscent of the Rig-Vedic hymn on creation. It is clearly a page taken from the oldest traditions.

> This is the recital of how everything was in latency, calm and silent; all was motionless, all was peace, and void was the immensity of the Heavens.
>
> Behold, then, the first Word and the first Utterance. As yet existed no man, no animal; no creatures that fly, that swim, or that live both on earth and in water; no wood, no stone, no heights, no depths, no grass, no forests: the Heavens alone existed.
>
> The face of the earth did not manifest itself yet; only the tranquil Sea was, and all the space of the Heavens.
>
> Nothing was embodied, nothing was correlated to any other thing; nothing was equilibrated, nothing caused the slightest attrition or any sound in the Heavens.
>
> There was naught vertical; there was only the still water, Sea calm and solitary within its limits; for there was nothing which existed.
>
> All was immobility and silence in the Darkness, in the Night; only the Creator, the Former, the Dominator, the Plumèd Serpent, they who engender, they who give being, were on the waters as an ever-increasing Light.
>
> They are enveloped in a Halo of green-fringèd blue; that is why their name is "The Serpent with plumes of the Paradise Bird." Of the greatest Sages is their Being: that is why the Heavens exist, and the Heart of the Heavens; such is the name of the Deity; it is thus that he is invoked.

In the Quiché language the plumèd or feathered serpent is called *Gucumatz*, but it is better known as *Quetzalcoatl*, its equivalent in the Nahuatl language of the Aztecs. *Quetzal* is the bird of paradise and *coatl* is the serpent. As the "Heart of the Heavens" it represents the Logos, whose Word or *Vach* brought all things into manifestation. As the serpent it is the divine electric fire and is given later a threefold nature. The serpent in man may be referred to as *Kundalini*, "the power or Force which moves in a curved path," and which H.P.B., in a footnote in *The Voice of the Silence*, equates with "*Buddhi* considered as an active instead of a passive principle (which it is generally, when regarded only as the vehicle, or casket of the Supreme Spirit, ATMA)."

[1] *Lucifer*, Vol. XV, September 1894 to February 1895.

The text of the *Popol Vuh* continues:—

> It is then that his Word came here with the Dominator and the Plumèd Serpent, in the Darkness and in the Night; and that it spoke with the Dominator, the Plumèd Serpent. And they spoke; then they consulted together and pondered. . . . Then, while they yet consulted, it became day. And, at the moment of the Aurora, MAN manifested himself, whilst they, in the darkness and in the night, were holding counsel upon the production and growth of trees and creeping vines, of sentient beings and Humanity, by him who is the Heart of the Heavens, whose name is Hurakan.
>
> Light is the first herald of Hurakan; the second is the undulation of the lightning-flash; the third is the thunderbolt which strikes: and these three are the Heart of the Heavens.
>
> And these came with the Dominator, the Plumèd Serpent; then they deliberated concerning organized life, what its germs should be, and how that Light should originate which was to be the vehicle and nourisher of the Man in the Heavens.
>
> "Let it be done thus," it was said: "Drink deep of the water, that it may retire and cease to cover, so that the Earth may exist, that it may solidify, presenting its surface to receive the seed-beings, and that the Dawn may shine through the Heavens upon the Earth; for we shall obtain neither recognition nor adoration until the Human Being exists, the being endowed with Reason."
>
> Thus they spoke, whilst the Earth was formed by them. Thus, of a truth, the Creation took place, and the Earth was spoken into being.

After some more details of a similar character this opening chapter closes in this way:—

> Thus was the fashioning of the earth when it was formed by those who are the Heart of the Heavens and the Heart of the Earth; for thus are called those who first gave fertility to them, the Heavens as yet untroubled, the Earth suspended in the midst of the waters of space. Thus was her vivification, she becoming vivified during their meditation upon her shadowing-forth and accomplishment.

The Man here referred to is the spiritual Man whom Mr. Judge calls in *The Ocean of Theosophy* the "Master," who, hidden from sight, carried forward in ages gone by "the plans for the foundations of the human temple." It is the Heavenly Man of the Kabalists, by which, says H.P.B., "the divine Monad is meant, and not the thinking Entity, much less his physical body" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 186). As a cosmic force, electric and fiery, Hurakan naturally corresponds to Fohat in its multitudinous aspects.

In this chapter, Mr. Pryse writes, we find six Gods mentioned, synthesized by the seventh, the Plumèd Serpent, "enveloped in a Halo of green-fringèd blue." These seven in their totality represent the seven great hierarchies from which the sevenfold constitution of all in Nature derives. While the above story of creation suggests some parallels to the *Genesis* story, there is a sculpture in an ancient temple of Chichen-Itza in Yucatan which is more typical of the Puranic legends of creation. Dr. Augustus le Plongeon in his *Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and the Quichés* describes the sculpture as follows:—

> Effectively, in the tableau we see represented a luminous egg, emitting rays, and floating in the midst of the waters where it had been deposited by the Supreme Intelligence. In that egg is seated the Creator, his body painted blue, his loins surrounded by a girdle; he holds a sceptre in his left hand; his head is adorned with a plume of feathers; he is surrounded by a serpent.

Here we have a description similar to that of Brahmā as he breaks forth from the golden egg, *Hiranyagarbha*; in place of the lotus symbolical of his creative powers the Maya sculpture gives the feathered serpent as the equivalent.

In the next chapter various attempts at creating man are described. The first of these seems to refer rather to the creation of elemental beings, but they could not speak. "They could not say our name, although we are their Creator and Former. This is not good." The Gods try again.

> "Let us try anew; already comes the seed-time, for, behold, the Aurora! Let us create those who shall be our vehicles and nourishers. What can we do that we may be invoked, and that we may be made manifest upon the face of the earth? We have already essayed our first work and creature; but it was impossible for them to salute and adore us. Therefore let us try to make men, devout and reverent, to be our vehicles and nourishers."
>
> They spoke. Then took place the creation and moulding of man. Of red earth they moulded his flesh.
>
> They saw that it was not good; for he lacked solidity, was jointless, powerless, incompetent and

mud-like...he was without intelligence: so he was dissolved by the water without being able to stand upright.

In *Isis Unveiled* H.P.B. refers to this "red-earth" man :—

In the Mexican *Popol Vuh* man is created out of *mud* or clay (*terre glaise*), taken from under the water. Brahma creates Lomus, the great Muni (or first man), seated on his lotus, only after having called into being, *spirits*, who thus enjoyed among mortals a priority of existence, and he creates him out of water, air, and earth. Alchemists claim that primordial or pre-Adamic earth when reduced to its first substance is in its *second* stage of transformation like clear water....This primordial substance is said to contain within itself the essence of all that goes to make up man. (I. 133)

The above creations are thus of the early ethereal races. In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. says of the first Race :—

Its "men" melted gradually away, becoming absorbed in the bodies of their own "sweat-born" progeny, more solid than their own. The old form vanished and was absorbed by, disappeared in, the new form, more human and physical. (II. 121)

And she adds :—

The spiritual ethereal Entity...needed no "elements." The "Manu with soft bones" could well dispense with calcic phosphate, as he had no bones, save in a figurative sense....The primitive ancestor, in Brasseur de Bourbourg's "*Popol Vuh*,"...answers only to the Second and early Third Races in our texts. And if the three kingdoms of Nature were so different in *pre*-diluvian ages, why should not man have been composed of materials and combinations of atoms now entirely unknown to physical science? (II. 160)

Before leaving this "red-earth" man it should be noted how universal is the concept. Adam was formed of red earth. Mannus, the reputed ancestor of the Germans, was the son of Tuisco, "the red son of the earth." Then Pyrrha, the wife of Deucalion, who was the reputed son of Prometheus, was also *the red*. Prometheus made man out of mud, that is, earth and water. It is interesting to note that in the *Popol Vuh* a parallel also exists to Prometheus' stealing of the fire from heaven, thus giving the light of wisdom and of occult knowledge to mortals. One of the Maya tribes is reported to have stolen the fire and thereby attained at once to wisdom and power. (*Popol Vuh*, Part III, Chapter 6.)

The creators try again. They call to their assistance another septenary group of creative powers and redesign man. And they say :—

"Make your passes over your grains of maize, over your cork-tree beans, to foresee if what we are working at will come to pass, while we carve his face and his mouth out of wood." (*Lucifer*, XV. 133)

But this race of "wooden mannikins" as the *Popol Vuh* calls them, made from this cork or *tzite* tree, and from reeds, was also a failure. "They remembered not the Heart of the Heavens —and, behold how they perished." (*Ibid.*, 134)

In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. says :—

The Norse Ask, the Hesiodic Ash-tree, whence issued the men of the generation of bronze, the Third Root-Race, and the *Tzite* tree of the *Popol Vuh*, out of which the Mexican *third* race of men was created, are all one....But the Occult reason why the Norse Yggdrasil, the Hindu Aswatha, the Gogard, the Hellenic tree of life, and the Tibetan Zampun, are one with the Kabalistic Sephirothal Tree, and even with the Holy Tree made by Ahura Mazda, and the Tree of Eden—who among the western scholars can tell? Nevertheless, the fruits of all those "Trees," whether Pippala or Haoma or yet the more prosaic apple, are the "plants of life," in fact and verity. (II. 97)

And again :—

In "Hesiod," Zeus creates his *third* race of men out of ash-trees. In the "Popol Vuh" the Third Race of men is created out of the tree *Tzita* and the marrow of the reed called *Sibac*. But Sibac means "egg" in the mystery language of the *Artufas* (or Initiation caves). (II. 181 fn.)

This race of wooden mannikins lacked self-consciousness; and the forms were not yet fit for the incarnation of the Manasic Ego. Chapter Three of Part I deals with the story of their ruin and destruction. "Nature unaided fails," explains *The Secret Doctrine* :—

She can produce the first two and the lower animal kingdoms, but when it comes to the turn of man, spiritual, independent and intelligent powers are required for his creation, besides the "coats of skin," and the "Breath of animal Life." (II. 56)

But all powers have their part to play in the drama of anthropogenesis. H.P.B. says again in *The Secret Doctrine* :—

Each class of Creators endows man with what it has to give; the one builds his external form; the other gives him its essence, which later on becomes

> the Human *Higher Self* owing to the *personal exertion of the individual*; but they could not make men as they were themselves...man had to be formed by more material creators, who, in their turn, could give only what they had in their own natures, and no more. ...The first humanity, therefore, was a pale copy of its progenitors; too material, even in its ethereality, to be a hierarchy of gods; too spiritual and pure to be MEN. (II. 95)

The rest of the chapters of Part I of the *Popol Vuh* go on to describe various gigantic beings, and many interesting stories are recounted of them and of the artifices devised for their destruction.

It is clear that more than one meaning is enshrined in the text of the *Popol Vuh*. All real scriptures convey seven meanings. The history of racial evolution is one interpretation, but the psychological key could also be used for the understanding of the fragment of ancient American wisdom, and several passages, it has been claimed, have a clear reference to the unfolding and developing of the powers and faculties of the inner being. The action of the various "fires" is also described.

The second part of the *Popol Vuh* describes the descent of two young pairs of devotees into the underworld called Xibalba. The first of these fail, but the second pair, the sons (next incarnation?) succeed. The descent into Hell or Hades and the rigorous trials undergone therein are a marked feature of many scriptures. They represent the trials of initiation in underground caves, or in temples or pyramids. The *Book of Job*, which has found a place in the Jewish Bible, but which is more Egyptian than Jewish, is a story of initiation. The Greeks have many legends relating to the descent of their heroes into Hades. Brasseur de Bourbourg thought that the writer of the *Popol Vuh* must have plagiarized the stories of the Egyptian mystic initiations. Certain similarities have also been traced to some of the visions described in the Book of Enoch. This book is also a story of initiation which is called apocryphal. The Apocalypse or Book of Revelation derives much from it. In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. says that "Hercules, the Sun-god, descends to Hades (the cave of Initiation) to deliver the victims from their tortures." (II. 237 fn.)

A special feature of Xibalba is the ball game played there. Ball-playing, a kind of tennis, was a religious exercise taught by the priests. Only the nobles were permitted to play it. The place of sacrifice was at the ball court. These ball courts are well marked in the ruins of the great palaces. In the *Popol Vuh*, however, the game is perhaps a symbol or veil for psycho-spiritual development. It is when the youths begin to play with this elastic ball that the Lords of Xibalba are aroused and command the presence of the audacious youths who have to descend to their abode. The trials through which they had to pass may well typify the powers of the astral world that have to be overcome. At the end of the trials the young men appear as fully developed magicians with power over life and death and able to resurrect themselves at will.

In the third part of the *Popol Vuh* the story of the creation of man is continued. This time the complete man is brought into being. Four ancestors are first formed and given names.

> These are the names of the first men who were created and formed: the first man was Balam-Quitzé, the second, Balam-Acab, the third, Mahucutah, and the fourth was Iqui-Balam.

H.P.B., in commenting upon Max Müller's review of the *Popol Vuh*, refers to these ancestors as follows:—

> The "four men" described as the real four ancestors of the human race, "who were neither begotten by the gods, nor born of woman," but whose "creation was a wonder wrought by the Creator," and who were made after three attempts at manufacturing men had failed, equally present some striking points of similarity with the esoteric explanations of the Hermetists; they also undeniably recall the four sons of God of the Egyptian theogony. Moreover, as any one may infer, the resemblance of this myth to the narrative related in *Genesis*, will be apparent to even a superficial observer. These four ancestors "could reason and speak, their sight was unlimited, and they knew all things at once." When "they had rendered thanks to their Creator for their existence, *the gods were frightened*, and they breathed a cloud over the eyes of men that they might see a certain distance only, and not be *like the gods themselves*." This bears directly upon the sentence in *Genesis*, "Behold, *the man is become as one of us*, to know good and evil;

and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life," etc. Then, again, "While *they were asleep* God gave them wives," etc. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 558)

Comment has already been made on the word "Balam," which is given to three of the ancestors, and its Chaldean connection. "Balam," according to Ximénez, means "Jaguar," but it also has the meaning of "wizard," says Recinos. In the *Popol Vuh* much is said about these four ancestors and their descendants. After a time of journeying they finally arrive at *Tulan-Zuiva* (or the cave of Tulan). The tribes are at first of one speech, but as they multiply, as in the story of the tower of Babel, they divide and their language differentiates. The legends now pass more particularly into the ancient history of the Mayas themselves. There are many suggestive passages, but the full elucidation of the text awaits the recognition of the key supplied by the Wisdom-Religion to unlock its secrets. To return for a moment to the four ancestors, H.P.B. says in *Isis Unveiled*:—

> ...is it not barely possible that these "four ancestors" of the Quiché race typify in their esoteric sense the four successive progenitors of men, mentioned in *Genesis* i., ii., and vi.? (I. 559)

And in *The Secret Doctrine* she states:—

> In the "*Great Book of the Mysteries*" we are told that: "Seven Lords created Seven men; three Lords (Dhyan Chohans or Pitris) were holy and good, four less heavenly and full of passion....The *chhayas* (phantoms) of the Fathers were as they."
>
> This accounts for the differences in human nature, which is divided into seven gradations of good and evil. There were seven tabernacles ready to be inhabited by Monads under seven different Karmic conditions. The Commentaries explain on this basis the easy spread of evil, as soon as the human Forms had become real men. Some ancient philosophers ignored the seven in their genetical accounts and gave only four. Thus the Mexican local *Genesis* has "four *good* men" described as the four real ancestors of the human race....The Egyptians had in their theology only "four sons of God," whereas in *Pymander seven* are given—thus avoiding any mention of the evil nature of man; though when Seth from a god sank into Set-Typhon, he began to be called "the seventh son." (II. 212–3)

H.P.B., referring to Max Müller's review of the *Popol Vuh*, says:—

> "The four ancestors of the race," adds Max Müller, "seem to have had a long life, and when at last they came to die, they disappeared in a mysterious manner, and left to their sons what is called the *hidden majesty*, which was never to be opened by human hands. What it was we do not know."
>
> If there is no relationship between this hidden majesty and the hidden glory of the Chaldean *Kabala*, which we are told was left behind him by Enoch when he was translated in such a mysterious way, then we must discredit all circumstantial evidence. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 559)

"Enoch is the type of the dual man spiritual and terrestrial," says H.P.B., and "He that 'walked with God' and 'did not die' is the spiritual Enoch." He is the terrestrial patriarch and father of Methuselah, to whom he passed the "Omnific Word" inscribed on a golden delta. In *Isis Unveiled* H.P.B. says:—

> When the Brahmātma was about to lay aside the burden of physical existence, he imparted his secret to his successor, either orally, or by a writing placed in a securely-fastened casket which went into the latter's hands alone. Moses "lays his hands" upon his neophyte, Joshua, in the solitudes of Nebo and passes away forever. Aaron initiates Eleazar on Mount Hor, and dies....Like signal-fires of the olden times, which, lighted and extinguished by turns upon one hill-top after another, conveyed intelligence along a whole stretch of country, so we see a long line of "wise" men from the beginning of history down to our own times communicating the word of wisdom to their direct successors. Passing from seer to seer, the "Word" flashes out like lightning, and while carrying off the initiator from human sight forever, brings the new initiate into view. (II. 571)
>
> The possession of the secret combination of the "name" gave the hierophant supreme power over every being, human or otherwise, inferior to himself in soul-strength. Hence, when Max Müller tells us of the Quiché "Hidden majesty which was never to be opened by human hands," the kabalist perfectly understands what was meant by the expression. (II. 344)

Something more might be said about the serpent or dragon symbol. In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. remarks: "The Occultists know that the serpent, the *Naga*, and the dragon have each a septenary meaning," and she goes on to say:—

> In every ancient language the word *dragon* signified what it now does in Chinese—(*lang*) *i.e.*, "*the being who excels in intelligence*" and in Greek *drakon*, or "he who sees and watches." And is it to the animal

of that name that any of these epithets can apply? Is it not evident, wherever superstition and oblivion of the primitive meaning may have led savages now, that the said qualifications were intended to apply to the human originals, who were symbolized by serpents and dragons? These "originals"—called to this day in China "the Dragons of Wisdom"—were the first disciples of the Dhyanis, who were their instructors; in short, the primitive adepts of the Third Race, and later, of the Fourth and Fifth Races. The Name became universal. (II. 210)

"Some of the descendants of the primitive Nagas, the Serpents of Wisdom," says H.P.B.,

peopled America, when its continent arose during the palmy days of the great Atlantis....Otherwise, whence the traditions and legends—the latter *always more true than history*, as says Augustin Thierry—and even the identity in the names of certain "medicine men" and priests, who exist to this day in Mexico? (*S.D.*, II. 182)

Brasseur de Bourbourg had also noted the similarity between the Indian Nagas and the American Nāgals, and in his *Mexique* he says:—

The Nargal was the Chaldean and Assyrian chief of the Magi (Rab-Mag), and the Nāgal was the chief sorcerer of the Mexican Indians. Both derive their names from Nergal-Serezer, the Assyrian god, and the Hindu Nāgas. Both have the same faculties and the power to have an attendant *dæmon*, with whom they identify themselves completely. (Quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, II. 213)

Commenting on this passage, H.P.B. says:—

Such similarity cannot be attributed to *coincidence*. A new world is discovered, and we find that, for our forefathers of the Fourth Race, it was already an old one. That Arjuna, Krishna's companion and *chela*, is said to have descended into *Pātāla*, the "antipodes," and therein married *Ulūpi*, a Nāga (or Nāgini rather), the daughter of the king of the Nāgas, Kauravya. (II. 213-14)

And in a footnote she adds:—

Ulūpi has an entirely Atlantean ring about it. Like Atlantis, it is neither a Greek nor a Sanskrit name, but reminds one of Mexican names. (II. 214 fn.)

In an article in *The Theosophist* (Vol. V, p. 9), it is stated:—

Until the appearance of a map published in Basle in 1522, wherein the name of America appears for the first time, *the latter was believed to be part of India*; and strange to him who does not follow the mysterious working of the human mind and its unconscious approximations to hidden truths—even the aborigines of the new continent, the Red-skinned tribes, the "Mongoloids" of Mr. Huxley, were named Indians. Names now attributed to chance: elastic word, that! Strange coincidence, indeed, to him, who does not know—science refusing yet to sanction the wild hypothesis—that there was a time when the Indian peninsula was at one end of the line, and South America at the other, connected by a belt of islands and continents.

Referring to the Dragons, this same article, stated by H.P.B. to have been written by a Master, further says:—

Have the Western Orientalists tried to find out the connection between all these Dragons and Serpents; between the "powers of Evil" in the cycles of epic legends, the Persian and the Indian, the Greek and the Jewish; between the contests of Indra and the giant; the Aryan Nāgas and the Iranian Aji Dāhaka; the Guatemalian Dragon and the Serpent of *Genesis*—etc., etc.? Professor Max Müller discredits the connection. So be it. But—the *fourth* Race of men, "men" whose sight was unlimited and who knew all things at once, the hidden as the unrevealed, is mentioned in the *Popol Vuh*....

Reference has been made to the *Artufas* or Initiation caves. It is admitted by the Catholics in Mexico that the old ceremonies continue to be practised. In a report published in the *Catholic World*, cited by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled*, it was revealed that

even where tribes have been for long years under the care of Christian teachers, heathen rites are practised in secret, and crypto-paganism, or *nagualism*, flourishes now, as in the days of Montezuma....Don Pedro Baptista Pino says: "All the pueblos have their *artufas*—so the natives call subterranean rooms with only a single door....These are impenetrable temples...and the doors are always closed on the Spaniards...." (I. 556-7)

On the same subject, quoting from Brasseur de Bourbourg's *Cartas*, H.P.B. writes:—

In de Bourbourg's book, Votan, the Mexican demi-god, in narrating his expedition, describes a subterranean passage, which ran underground, and terminated at the root of the heavens, adding that this passage was a snake's hole, "*un ahugero de colubra*"; and that he was admitted to it because he was himself a son of the snakes," or a serpent.

This is, indeed, very suggestive; for his description of the *snake's hole* is that of the ancient Egyptian crypt....The hierophants, moreover, of Egypt, as of Babylon, generally styled themselves the "Sons of the Serpent-god," or "Sons of the Dragon"; ...because, in the Mysteries, the serpent was the symbol of WISDOM and immortality....

De Bourbourg hints that the chiefs of the name of Votan, the Quetzo-Cohuatl, or serpent deity of the Mexicans, are the descendants of Ham and Canaan. "I am Hivim," they say. "Being a Hivim, I am of the great race of the Dragon (snake). I am a snake myself, for I am a Hivim."...

As far as affiliation goes, we agree with this pious writer; and we feel every day as certain that some of the peoples of Central America will be traced back to the Phœnicians and the Mosaic Israelites, as we do that the latter will be proved to have as persistently stuck to the same idolatry—if idolatry there is—of the sun and serpent-worship, as the Mexicans. (I. 553-555)

"Occult Science," H.P.B. tells us in *The Secret Doctrine*, "still holds the Key to all the world problems." And she adds :—

Let us apply that Key to the rare fragments of long-forgotten cosmogonies and try by their scattered parts to re-establish the once Universal Cosmogony of the Secret Doctrine. The Key fits them all. No one can study ancient philosophies seriously without perceiving that the striking similitude of conception between all—in their exoteric form very often, in their hidden spirit invariably—is the result of no mere coincidence, but of a concurrent design : and that there was, during the youth of mankind, one language, one knowledge, one universal religion, when there were no churches, no creeds, or sects, but when every man was a priest unto himself. And, if it is shown that already in those ages which are shut out from our sight by the exuberant growth of tradition, human religious thought developed in uniform sympathy in every portion of the globe; then, it becomes evident that, born under whatever latitude, in the cold North or the burning South, in the East or West, that thought was inspired by the same revelations, and man was nurtured under the protecting shadow of the same TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. (I. 341)

VIVISECTION AND MORAL DEBASEMENT

It is with considerable regret that students of Theosophy and all humanitarians and anti-vivisectionists will receive the announcement of the Indian Government's plans for continuing the availability to the United States of rhesus monkeys from India for medical research and poliomyelitis vaccine production. Under the new arrangements, the Indian Government will export rhesus monkeys during the year ending June 30th, 1956, "in quantities sufficient to meet U.S. needs."

What can harden or debase human nature so quickly or so hatefully as the killing of compassion in the heart of man? It reflects the moral debasement of India that she should play a part in subjecting our younger brothers of the animal kingdom to experiments involving the most revolting cruelty. Man's inhumanity towards helpless, dumb animals is indefensible from any angle, and vivisectors as well as those who condone their methods in the name of medical research will doubtless have to share in the reaction certain to visit all offences against the unity of Life. Brain without heart can be a dangerous thing indeed.

H.P.B. wrote in her article, "Have Animals Souls?" (reprinted from *The Theosophist* in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. IX, for August, September and October 1939) :—

...verily when the world feels convinced—and it cannot avoid coming one day to such a conviction—that animals are creatures as eternal as we ourselves, vivisection and other permanent tortures, daily inflicted on the poor brutes, will, after calling forth an outburst of maledictions and threats from society generally, force all Governments to put an end to those barbarous and shameful practices.

As the depths of the mighty Ocean are calm though storms rage on its surface, so be thou calm by retiring to the depths of thy nature.

—*Shaman's Devotions*

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

On August 25th the Rajya Sabha passed, amid a chorus of approval, the Bill providing for the abolition of whipping as a form of punishment. The Home Minister, Pandit G. B. Pant, told the House that in choosing methods of punishment care should be taken to see that "we do not brutalize society or turn men into brutes."

It seems to be the opinion of almost all who have studied the subject of penology that whipping does not serve any social purpose. If this is accepted, then abolition of whipping becomes necessary. In fact Pandit Pant said that those who were subjected to this sort of punishment did not give up their evil ways but became still more desperate and sadistic and filled with feelings of hate and revenge. He also agreed that third-degree methods should go.

Referring to suggestions that capital punishment should be abolished, the Home Minister assured the House that in due course that too would be done. The student of Theosophy cannot agree with Pandit Pant's contention that, while corporal punishment did produce some undesirable effect on society, a man sentenced to death could do no wrong to himself or to others thereafter. There can be no doubt that capital punishment is not the real answer and must eventually be abolished from all civilized communities.

The principles of Theosophy stand against not only capital punishment but all alternative punishments whatever. Restraint of the physical man; education of the moral, mental and emotional man—these are the only attitudes which Theosophy countenances as either effective or justified. Punishment, in itself, never restrains a man from evil-doing. On the contrary, it encourages him to evil, for it inevitably creates in his heart resentment and fear—and these are the roots of crime. Repudiation of the principle of punishment may thus be seen to underlie the classic Theosophical argument against capital punishment :—

> When . . . the mere physical body is so treated that a sudden, premature separation from the real man is effected, he is merely dazed for a time, after which he wakes up in the atmosphere of the earth, fully a sentient living being save for the body. He sees the people, he sees and feels again the pursuit of him by the law. His passions are alive. He has become a raging fire, a mass of hate; the victim of his fellows and of his own crime. Few of us are able, even under favourable circumstances, to admit ourselves as wholly wrong and to say that punishment inflicted on us by man is right and just, and the criminal has only hate and desire for revenge.

India's new official policy towards the activities of Christian missionaries in this country is briefly described in the latest Government year book published on the eighth anniversary of the country's independence.

In future, the issue of visas to foreign missionaries will be guided by two considerations. First, no new missionaries will be permitted to enter India, either as replacements or as additional members of missions, unless Indian missionaries are not available to fill these positions. Secondly, while the foreign missionaries already in India will be permitted to carry on their present activities, new missionaries will not be welcome if they are to devote themselves entirely to religious propagation. They should, in addition, have suitable qualifications as educationists, doctors or social workers to interest themselves in constructive activities.

It is indeed time that the Government of free India took steps to check the insidious activities of Christian missionaries in this country, who, to achieve their objective of proselytizing the "heathens," resort to subtle and often highly objectionable methods. If Jesus came to earth again he would disown many things that are being done in the name of Christianity, among them the proselytizing work of Christian missionaries, Even their social and educational activities are rightly suspect.

H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled* in 1877 :—

> Despite missions, despite armies, despite enforced commercial intercourse, the "heathen" find nothing in the teachings of Jesus—sublime though some are—that Christna and Gautama had not taught them before. And so, to gain over any new converts, and keep the

few already won by centuries of cunning, the Christians give the "heathen" dogmas more absurd than their own, and cheat them by adopting the habit of their native priests, and practising the very "idolatry and fetishism" which they so disparage in the "heathens." (II. 531)

Time and again one hears or reads statements from serious-minded people that a disintegration of moral values, is in evidence everywhere. This vein of thought has, these days, been most manifest in the United States, and from the article of Judge Elijah Adlow on "Teen-Age Criminals" (*The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1955), there appears to be some real reason for apprehension. As Chief Justice of the Municipal Court of Boston for 27 years, the author has had to sentence many young offenders.

He drives home a few pertinent points. The first is that, though the offenders are juveniles and adolescents, there is nothing "juvenile" about the new brand of delinquency; that major robberies and sexual offences are committed with a "cold-blooded indifference...to the penal consequences." Secondly, he exposes the current nonsense indulged in by foolish parents, that even disciplinary inhibitions may stifle the "impulses" of their children and some "latent talent may be frustrated"! In examining the setting in which the modern American youth plays his rôle, the author cannot help laying the blame at the door of the parents. "It would be absurd," he says, "to expect that at a time when adult America is indulging in an orgy of lawlessness, youth should reveal moderation and restraint."

This antisocial behaviour, explains Judge Adlow, may be because "modern youth has a great deal of time on its hands," as a consequence of some over-zealous and injudicious legislation which forbids young people to engage in many pursuits which once afforded opportunities for wholesome employment. The cultural background also is not conducive to any sobriety.

The author repeatedly stresses that "no one can replace parents in the training of children, and the sooner the new liberalism discovers this the sooner will it be on the right road to a solution." Ancient Oriental Wisdom, of which modern Theosophy is an efflorescence, has justly made the family the vitally essential unit of society, the nation and the human race, and man naturally constitutes the unit of the family. It then becomes clear that, if the human individual becomes aware of his own nature and of his place in the scheme of Nature, he ceases to be antisocial and destructive; for he realizes that such action retards his own progress.

The Theosophy School at many centres of the U.L.T. aims to provide the right basis of ethics and philosophy which alone can save the ideals of the coming generation. It has been devoted to the task of inculcating true concepts of Manhood in the children, who are after all mature minds in juvenile brains. The responsibility for the disgusting perversity of physical behaviour, which Judge Adlow and others have described, rests squarely on us all, in one continent or another, of one "race" or another, for the human family consists only of Man. It is not, as the author says, that parents alone forget, but periodically we all "forget that it is important to be 'men' first."

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